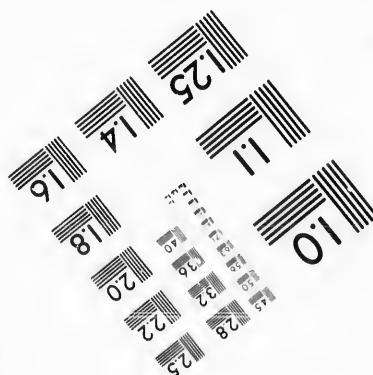
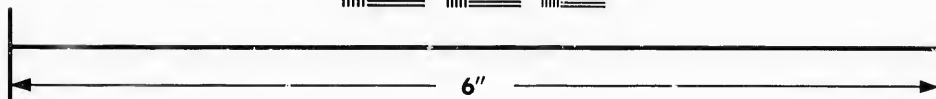
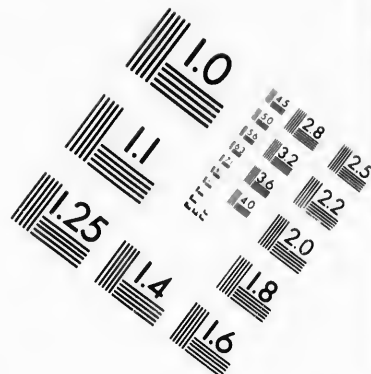




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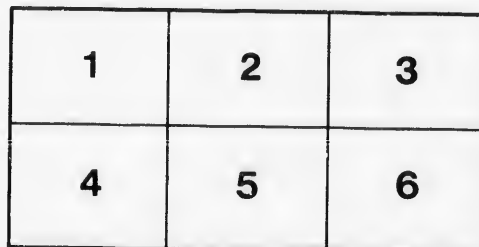
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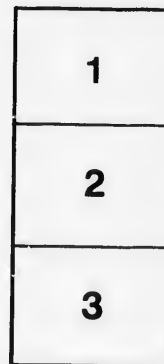
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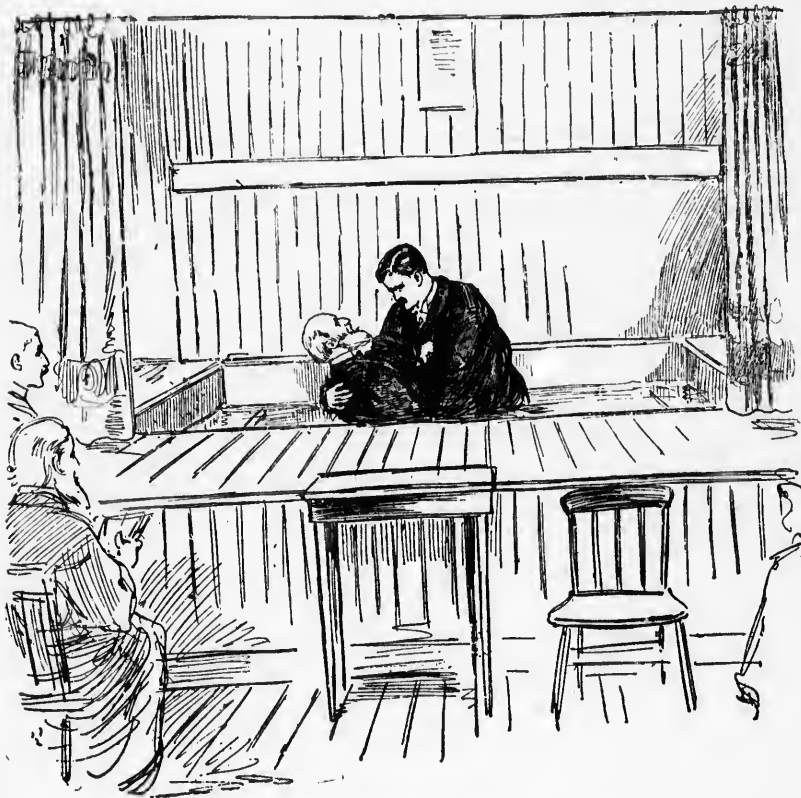
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CHANGED THEIR FAITH.

IMPRESSIVE EVENT AT MASKINONGÉ.



THE IMMERSION.

From the "MONTREAL DAILY STAR" August 26th, 1892.

This report was taken on the spot and sketches made by a Roman Catholic.

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IMPRESSIVE EVENT AT MASKINONGÉ.

AUGUST 26TH, 1892.

Maskinongé has now a Baptist Church and a Baptist congregation. This is the first time this occurs in its history. The church is what was last year styled "La Chapelle Mandite," or "Cursed Chapel." Yesterday afternoon the final separation from the Roman Catholic Church took place. The quiet village has rarely witnessed an event which created such a profound impression on the population. Ten men and one woman were received publicly into the Baptist denomination, and the impressive baptismal service of that church was duly performed. The day was a miserable one, but notwithstanding this fact the dissenters' chapel was filled at the time of the service, which took place at two o'clock. Quite a number of clergymen, laymen and ladies went out from Montreal by the morning train, the party being strengthened by a contingent from Berthier. The arrival of the party created a stir in the village and each new comer was carefully scanned. The proceedings were carried out with all due solemnity and nothing occurred to mar the ceremony. Among those who were present were the Rev. T. Lafleur, Secretary, and Mr. Jos. Richards, Treasurer of the Grande Ligne Mission; the Rev. Donald Grant, pastor of the First Baptist Church; the Rev. W. T. Graham, pastor of Grace Baptist Church; the Rev. Principal Massé, of the Grande Ligne Mission; the Rev. A. L. Therrien, pastor of L'Oratoire, the French Baptist Church; the Rev. A. J. Lebeau, Marieville; Mr. John B. Warnieker, Missionary Olivet Baptist Church; the Rev. Mr. Côté, Mr. D. Bentley, Messrs. John A. Cameron, Ottawa; George Edwards, Thurso, and others, with a dozen or more ladies.

A VISIT TO THE CHAPEL.

The visitors, on their arrival, proceeded at once to the chapel, which is situated in the heart of the village, and immediately opposite the new Catholic church now in course of construction and which has been the source of all the trouble. The chapel is a wooden building with a seating capacity of about three hundred. It is scrupulously clean and plain. It was erected last year by some 200 heads of families, who paid up about half its value. It is valued at \$1500. It is erected on land purchased by the villagers and given to the Bishop of Three Rivers for the erection of the new Catholic church, the old one, two miles away having become too small for the increased population. Two years ago at the time that Mgr. Lafleche visited Maskinongé, he blessed the ground on which the chapel now stands, and a cross being erected declared that it would be the site of the new church. Subsequently the majority of the parish,

largely farmers residing beyond the limits of the village, decided that the church should be erected on the west side of the river, on the spot where it now stands. The dissenters charged that the change had been made at the instigation of the parish priest, though this has been denied. The Bishop declared he had no option but to give in to the will of the majority. The trustees borrowed \$40,000 and started the new church, which will be open for worship in October. The villagers then erected this chapel. They provided it with an altar and all that is to be found in an orthodox Catholic church. For months hundreds of them met there every Sunday, chanted hymns and recited their beads and prayers. The tapers on the altar were lighted and all was in readiness for the priest, who never came. Early in July of last year the Rev. Father Hendricks, of the Redemptorist Order, went to Maskinongé to preach a retreat. When he arrived there he declared that he would go to the dissenters' chapel on a Sunday morning as the people had met for public worship, declaring that he would be able to bring them all back to the parochial church. The people were on their knees in prayer when the priest entered. He walked to the altar railings, when he was asked if he had come to bless the chapel. Then a scene of great excitement followed as the priest, holding his crucifix in his uplifted right hand said that they were committing a great sin and that their meeting place instead of being blessed

WAS CURSED.

A scene of great disorder followed, many of the women fainting. It was only with great energy that some were restrained from using violence. The priest left the chapel and none followed him to the church. For months after people met again in the chapel for prayers, but their number dwindled every succeeding week. The women remained away, going quietly in the early hours to low mass at the parochial church. Some of the former dissenters did not go to any place of worship, and such is the case to-day. In November last the Rev. Mr. Burwash, of the Grande Ligne Mission, appeared on the scene. At first the people did not want to have anything to do with him, many saying: "We are Catholics, and we intend remaining Catholics." After a time, however, the Rev. Mr. Burwash visited the chapel regularly and preached to those present. The Rev. Mr. Therrien did the same, as did also the Rev. Mr. Bullock, the minister now in charge of the church. Finally a congregation was formed, numbering thirty though as many as ninety have attended some of the meetings. In the meantime the new Catholic church was being erected, and

the Sacristy being finished, the parish priest, the Rev. Abbe Lafleche, nephew of the Bishop, and his vicar came and said mass there every Sunday for the convenience of the villagers who had remained faithful to the Catholic church, and these were the immense majority. Some efforts were made to bring about a settlement of the difficulty. Mgr. Lafleche, through intermediaries offered to bless the dissenters' chapel and to give them a priest for a year until the new church was completed. This offer, if made, was not accepted. The Rev. Mr. Bullock was regularly stationed at Maskinongé, and yesterday the crowning event came off.

A GREAT CHANGE

has occurred at the chapel. The altar and all emblems of Catholic faith have been removed. The chapel itself was partitioned off, and a platform erected in the present end of it. During the morning a great deal of speculation was indulged in as to who would join the new faith. The number was put at 13. At two o'clock the service commenced, the chapel being filled by over two hundred people, a large number being attracted by curiosity. Ten men and one woman, all attired in black flowing robes, filed into the chapel from the rear and took up the two front pews. These were the new converts. The Rev. Messrs. Lafleur, Therrien, Bullock and Massé occupied seats on the platform. A choir of ladies, aided by a harmonium, chanted several evangelical hymns. The entire service was in French. The Rev. Mr. Lafleur led in prayer and asked the special blessing of heaven on that solemn occasion. The Rev. Mr. Massé read, selecting from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Then the Rev. Mr. Therrien preached, taking for his text, St. Matthew, chapter 28, verses 19 and 20: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

The sermon was an eloquent one and produced much effect. At its conclusion he addressed those about to be baptized, telling them that though they might be sneered at they should not be ashamed of what they were doing; Christ himself had gone through the same ceremony.

THE BAPTISM.

The time for the baptismal ceremony had now arrived. Subdued excitement reigned in the chapel. The people stood up. The platform was cleared, the desk and chairs being removed. It was opened up and a large zinc basin some four feet deep, fifteen feet long and four feet wide, was revealed. It contained water three feet deep. The Rev. A. L. Therrien descended into it from the

rear. Then the solemn moment arrived. One by one the ten men appeared, descended the short stairs into the water, Mr. Therrien leading them by the hand. They stood in the centre for a moment. They made their profession of faith according to the Baptist ritual. Then Mr. Therrien putting his hands on their shoulders and breast, turned them backwards full length into the water until they were entirely immersed. A moment after he raised them up, and, wiping their faces, lead them on to the end of the reservoir, where Mr. Bullock assisted them out into the rear, where they removed their wet attire. Just as they were about to be immersed Mr. Therrien would end by saying: I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The new converts were evidently laboring under great excitement during this ceremony. Their names are as follows:—

Hilarion Martin.
Hermidas Desserre.
Pierre Desserre.
Ovide Vertefeuille.
— Beaulieu, son of Abraham.
Isaie Marchand.
Edmund Marchand.
Gosford Marchand.
Cyrille Clouthier.
Madame Joseph Lefebvre.

The most prominent man among those baptized is Mr. Isaie Marchand, who is a leading citizen of the county and a wealthy man. With him were his two sons. Mr. Marchand, who is 65, had always been a devout Catholic. In fact they were all fervent Catholics. Another son of Mr. Marchand is a priest in the State of Maine. Mr. Clouthier is over 60 and so is his sister, Madame Lefebvre. Only three are unmarried among the baptized. They are all farmers with the exception of the Marchands, who are traders. Two other farmers who were to be baptized had to desist owing to the strenuous opposition of their wives and families. The event created a profound impression among the Catholic members of the families concerned. After the baptismal ceremony was over the chapel was erected into a Baptist church in accordance with the usual formula.

The following congratulatory despatch was read from the Baptist Convention of the Maritime Provinces in session at Bridgetown, N. S. :—

Congratulation—Sympathy and good wishes.

(Signed), J. A. GORDON, D.D.

The French Baptist churches, under the direction of the Grande Ligne Missions in the Province now, are as follows:—Grande Ligne, Clarenceville, South Ely, Roxton Pond, Emileville, Marieville, Montreal and Maskinongé, with ten mission stations.



THE NEW UNFINISHED R. C. CHURCH ON
THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE RIVER
FROM THE CURSED CHAPEL,
MASKINONGÉ.

NOTICE.

All contributions for Grande Ligne Mission General Funds,
or Maskinongé Special Fund, to be sent to JOSEPH RICHARDS,
114 St. Peter Street, Montreal.

